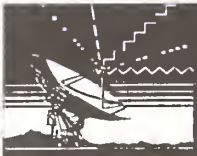


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2701

February 17, 1995

PILOT OPTIONS PROGRAM STILL FLYING -- USDA's Pilot Options Program will continue in 1995, with the addition of selected counties in Nebraska and Ohio. Authorized by the 1990 farm bill, it provides federal support for commodities through the purchasing of options contracts. Participants receive an incentive payment of 5 cents per bushel to cover transaction fees and other costs. Enrollment is taking place at the county offices of USDA's Consolidated Farm Service Agency through April 28. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

WATER WORKS -- USDA will provide \$12.2 million in financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers participating in Water Quality Incentive Projects. Through 65 projects in 28 states, water quality is improved by reducing the source of agricultural pollutants. Incentive payments are made to producers to reduce agricultural nonpoint source pollution while maintaining an efficient and economical farm operation. Projects include pesticide and nutrient management, animal waste application reduction and improved irrigation water management. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

FARM PROGRAM PROVISIONS -- The final farm program provisions for the 1995 crops of wheat, feed grains, upland cotton and rice were announced (February 9). Based on public comments, the final provisions call for producers to receive 50 percent of their estimated deficiency payments in advance, the same crops as before will be prohibited on flex acres, and the harvesting of oats on acreage under the Acreage Conservation Reserve will not be allowed. For more information about the 1995 provisions, contact your local Consolidated Farm Service Agency office. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

PESTICIDE RECORDKEEPING CHANGES -- What, where, when and how much are the questions pesticide users will have to answer beginning on May 11, 1995. That's the date USDA has set for pesticide users to comply with amendments to the federal pesticide recordkeeping regulations. These requirements apply to all applicators using or supervising the use of restricted-use pesticides. Major changes include a shortened time frame for making records, a requirement for more specific spot application records and the availability of information for medical treatment. **Contact: Connie Crunkleton (202) 720-8998.**

MORE WHEAT FOR CHINA -- China is eligible for an additional 1,000,000 metric tons of wheat under USDA's Export Enhancement Program, says USDA Acting Secretary Richard Rominger (February 7). Sales of wheat will be made to buyers in China through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. **Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 720-3930.**

HOT MEXICAN FRUIT -- USDA will now allow the use of high-temperature forced air as a commodity treatment for grapefruit and mangoes imported from Mexico. Boxes of fruit are placed into sealed chambers with heated air until the fruit's core reaches 118 degrees Fahrenheit. These treatments were developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service and are effective against several fruit flies. **Contact: Ed Curlett (301) 436-3256.**

NEW VACCINE TO SLOW RABIES -- USDA is announcing the approval of a field test for an oral rabies vaccine on coyotes in Texas. USDA's Animal Damage Control (ADC) goal is to create a buffer zone of immunized coyotes to try and prevent the further spread of canine rabies across Texas into more heavily populated areas of the state. Because of the danger to humans and pets from rabid wildlife, ADC is helping to find solutions to threats to public health and safety. **Contact: Robin Porter (301) 734-6573.**

NEVADA ERADICATES PSEUDORABIES -- USDA has declared Nevada free of pseudorabies, a destructive viral disease of livestock. Nevada is the fourteenth state to achieve Stage V or "Free" status in the state-federal-industry cooperative pseudorabies eradication program. Stage V, pseudorabies-free status, is achieved if a state goes for one year without finding a swine herd infected with pseudorabies. The goal of this national eradication program is to eradicate pseudorabies from all U.S. domestic swine herds and U.S. territories by the year 2000. **Contact: Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898.**

USDA AMENDS LIME ORDER -- USDA has amended the Lime Research, Promotion and Consumer Information Order to reflect amendments made by Congress in late 1993. The order revises the definition of the term "lime" to cover seedless rather than seeded limes, increases the exemption level, requires the initial referendum to be conducted no later than 30 months after assessments begin and makes changes to the regulating board. **Contact: Gil High (202) 720-8998.**

GREEN AND WAX BEANS -- USDA is proposing to revise the standards for grades of frozen green and wax beans. Grade standards would be converted to statistically-based individual attributes standards similar to revised standards for canned green and wax beans. This would also establish acceptable quality levels and acceptance numbers based on specified sample size. **Contact: Gil High (202) 720-8998.**

ONION STANDARDS -- USDA is seeking comments on a proposal to revise the U.S. grade standards for onions. A 20 pound minimum sample size would be established for consumer packages and establish a "U.S. No. 1 Peeled" grade. A "Colossal" size designation also would be established and export size designations would be eliminated. **Contact: Gil High (202) 720-8998.**

RECORD HIGH PEAR EXPORTS -- U.S. pear exports reached their highest level ever last year, increasing 39 percent from the 1992/93 marketing season to \$73 million. Exports for the 1994/95 season are already up an additional 38 percent, an increase USDA officials attribute to the Market Promotion Program. **Contact: Donald Washington (202) 720-3101.**

NASS ADMINISTRATOR NAMED -- Donald Bay has been selected as administrator of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Bay had been serving as acting administrator for NASS since April 1992 because of the extended illness and subsequent death of the previous administrator, Charles Caudill. Bay is responsible for the agency's efforts to collect and report statistical data on crop and livestock production, inventories, prices and other agricultural economic indicators. **Contact: Dixie Lee (202) 690-2146.**

DAIRY REPORT CHANGES DATE -- The release date for the Dairy: World Markets and Trade report will change from February 28 to March 28, 1995. The second 1995 edition of the dairy report will be released on July 31. **Contact: Donald Washington (202) 720-3101.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1968 -- The Government's efforts to expand the NOAA weather radio system is the topic of this week's Agriculture USA. Gary Crawford visits a weather radio station and forecast center to find out about plans to bring weather radios into every American home and gathering place. (Weekly cassette -- 13-1/2 minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME # 1449 -- Higher cattle inventories mean lower beef prices; cattle as bird feed?; copper deficiency and heart disease; getting nuisance birds to fly away; is weather radio for you? (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1960 -- China's trading practices; China outlook; corn export prospects steady despite recent events; 1995 farm program provisions; manure digester reduces odor. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Monday, March 13, feed outlook; wheat outlook; rice outlook; oil crops update; oilseeds markets and trade. Tuesday, March 14, livestock slaughter; weekly weather and crops. Wednesday, March 15, milk production report; aquaculture update. Friday, March 17, cattle on feed report; sheep outlook; sugar and sweeteners update. Monday, March 20, ag outlook. Tuesday, March 21, weekly weather and crops. Wednesday, March 22, Agricultural Outlook Forum. We will bring you reports from the Agricultural Outlook Forum on Wednesday and Thursday. Thursday, March 23, outlook forum reports; catfish processing; livestock, dairy and poultry report. Friday, March 24, ag trade update; livestock slaughter. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carry many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m., ET, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on crop insurance sign-up deadlines and Eric Parsons reports on the final 1995 farm program provisions.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA meteorologist Norton Strommen on the latest weather and crop conditions.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

Thursday, 3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, Telstar 302, Channel 6 (Transponder 3H), (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3820 MHz. Monday, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET, Galaxy 4, Channel 12 (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3940 MHz.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.

Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

DOUBLE DUTY REPORTING...Max Armstrong (WGN, Chicago, IL) was in Japan covering a major agricultural story about that country's first importation of U.S. apples when a tragic earthquake hit several hundred miles away. Max was dispatched to handle quake reports for WGN and ABC radio. Also, he was interviewed on TV news shows in Chicago and Los Angeles.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE...to Agriculture in the Empire State Award was presented recently to **Ed Slusarczyk** (Ag Radio Network, Utica, NY) by the New York Farm Bureau. Ed founded the Ag Radio Network which today provides farm and consumer news to 136 radio stations in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Vermont and Maine.

NEW FARM DIRECTOR...at WIMA/WIMT (Lima, OH), is **Gary Jackson**. Formerly assistant farm director at WRFD (Columbus, OH), Gary replaces **Bob Ziegler**. Farmers in his area are exploring increased use of conservation tillage and are concerned about property rights issues. Gary uses our daily radio newsline to capsule reports on several agricultural topics.

BOOT HEEL OF MISSOURI...had such a good cotton crop last year that farmers are getting eager to plant this year's crop especially with continued good prices, reports **Hugh Robinson** (KTMO, Kennett, MO). Last year was a good one for their crops of watermelons, peaches and cantaloupes, too. Hugh voices five minutes of news and markets every hour from 6:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. and finds our newsline useful in those broadcasts.

MILK STORIES...for broadcasters are offered through a National Milk Audio Service that is operated by **Thom Wilborn**, formerly Associated Press agricultural reporter, who is now with the National Milk Producers Federation. More information is available from Thom at 703-243-6111.

THANKS...to those who have reported to us about how you use our services. It helps us plan for the future.



LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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